

E 351

.8

.A19

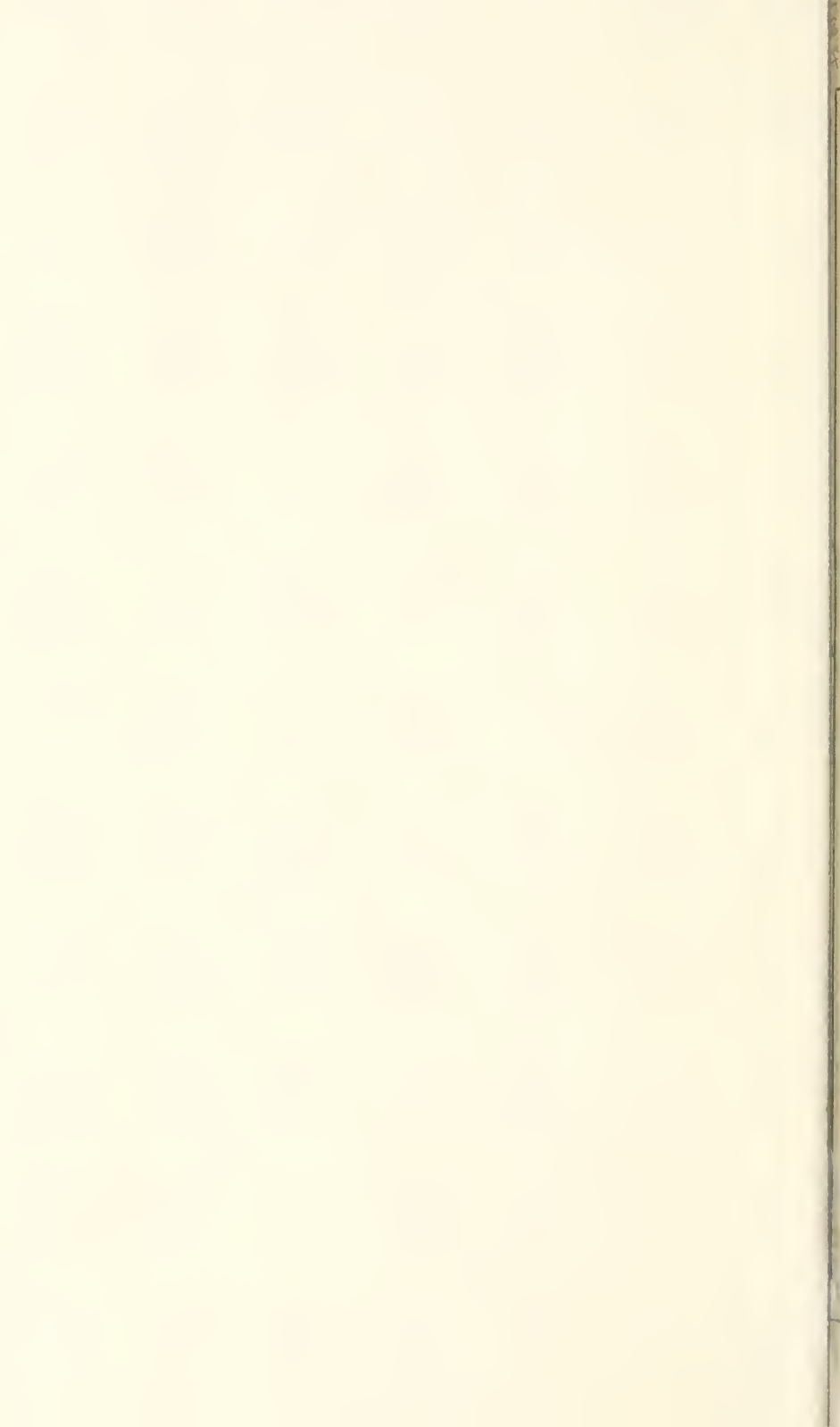
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00005023750







ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION

OF THE

Soldiers of the War of 1812,

AT THE

DISSOLUTION OF THEIR ASSOCIATION, OCTOBER, 1879.

BY CHARLES HUDSON,

PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION.

LAWRENCE, MASS.:

LAWRENCE DAILY EAGLE STEAM BOOK AND JOB PRINTING OFFICE.

1879.



ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION

OF THE

Soldiers of the War of 1812,

AT THE

DISSOLUTION OF THEIR ASSOCIATION, OCTOBER, 1879.

BY CHARLES HUDSON,

PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION.

LAWRENCE, MASS.:

LAWRENCE DAILY EAGLE STEAM BOOK AND JOB PRINTING OFFICE.

1879.

650.

7



ADDRESS.

Nations, like individuals, have generally a natural growth. Certain epochs in their history will be marked by some new development. In this respect our country forms no exception. Passing over our Colonial pupilage, we had a long and painful struggle with our mother country, till we wrung from her an acknowledgment of our independence. But the treaty was general in its character, and somewhat ambiguous in some of its provisions. Great Britain, in her natural haughtiness, and smarting under the loss of her colonies, was disposed to put her own construction upon the treaty, and to carry out its provisions in a manner most promotive of her inclination and interest.

Jay's treaty in 1794, did little more than to postpone certain misunderstandings between the two nations. Regarding herself as mistress of the ocean, and the arbiter of all maritime questions, England assumed the right of dictating to our country the course we must pursue on all commercial subjects. Among her haughty measures, she enforced the right of blockading the entire coast of her enemies, substituting for the *adequate force* which the law requires to render the blockade valid, her orders in council; thus rendering our ships liable to capture which attempted to trade with France or any nation subject to her control, which at that time, constituted almost the entire continent of Europe. She also claimed and exercised the *right of search*, by which her naval officers were authorized to board any of our ships on the pretence that they were searching for English seamen who were unlawfully serving on board of our vessels. Under that assumed authority, her naval commanders entered on board our ships, and seized any* one they suspected to be an English subject, and compelled him to serve in their navy,—they assuming the sole right to judge,—and in some cases, they seized our citizens who had their official protections in their hands, bearing the seal of our own government.

By these arbitrary exercises of unlawful power, our commerce was put in jeopardy, and our citizens deprived of that protection which every nation is bound to extend to its subjects. Our trade was not only practically cut off from Europe; but the boarding of our

merchant vessels, and taking off a portion of their crew, might, and in some cases did, endanger their safe navigation. And the impressment of our seamen was nothing less than an act of war—a system of man-stealing of which no honorable nation would be guilty, and to which no free nation would submit. For these and other grievances, our country had recourse to arms. And the encroachments upon our rights were amply sufficient to justify a declaration of war. In fact the honor of our country called us to the field. We could not claim the honor of being a free and independent nation, while the right of navigating the ocean, and of protecting our hardy mariners were subject to the will of a haughty and arbitrary foreign power. The war of 1812 was essential to our national freedom, and has justly been denominated the *Second War of Independence*.

I have been thus particular in stating the causes of this war, and the questions at issue, because in the mutations of national events, these subjects have been in a great degree overlooked and forgotten. But they form an important link in the chain of our history. What if England had acknowledged us a free and independent nation? if we permitted her to rob us of the essential prerogatives of sovereignty, we could not boast of being free. The war of 1812 was an assertion of our essential rights—a proclamation to the world that we should maintain our character and be in fact a free and sovereign power; and while we gladly acknowledged the rights of other nations, we were determined to maintain our own. This war was but the carrying out of the declaration of Independence, and showing Great Britain that we would sustain the character which she recognized, when by solemn treaty she declared us a free and independent nation. Our Revolutionary fathers continued the painful struggle, till the insane king and haughty ministry of England were compelled to admit us into the family of nations; and the heroes of the second war of Independence maintained our rights, till the boasted mistress of the ocean was willing to see the stars and stripes float upon the wave, and our canvas whiten every sea.

Our illustrious ancestors who laid broad and deep the foundation of our free institutions, and whom our country delighted to honor, have gone to their rest, rejoicing we hope, in the rich patrimony they have left us. And where are the patriots who finished the work which their fathers began—who not only approved the foundation and admired the structure, but were the instruments by whom the key-stone which binds the whole was brought on with rejoicing. They, alas, have mostly gone to their long homes. A few of us re-

main—"A chosen seed of Israel's race, a remnant weak and small." We have been permitted to wait, and witness the fruit of our labor and suffering. My venerable friends and comrades, you will permit me to address you as though I were not one of your number. I see by your hoary locks and bending forms that you came down from a former generation, and something more than ordinary has brought you here this day. The ties of military brotherhood and the consciousness that you served your country, have animated you and brought you here once more to meet your companions in arms, and rejoice with them that when your country called, you were among those who came forward in her defence; and the motto upon your banners, or the words upon your lips, were, *Free Trade and Sailor's Rights*, must and shall be maintained. You obeyed the call of your country, and contributed to humble the proud foe which boasted of being Queen of the Isles and of the seas. You with others of your countrymen, taught her that freemen contending for their rights, were more than a match for her foreign hirelings. You taught her that neither her boasted legions, her hired Germans, nor her savage allies, would in the end, prevail in the tyrannical attempt to subjugate freemen fighting for their homes and fire-sides—their wives and children. The bloody fields of Chippewa, of Niagara, of Plattsburg, and the Thames, showed her that Americans had not degenerated since the capture of Burgoyne and Cornwallis; and our victories on the ocean and on the Lakes, contained conclusive evidence that her boasted marine superiority, was as hollow as her pretended glory was vain.

She found to her surprise and mortification that her supposed invincibility upon the water was not only challenged, but confuted by the hardy sons of New England. She found by experience that though our navy was small, it had a firm and enduring "Constitution," and when she strove to divert us and to turn our efforts into mere sport by sending us her "Frolic," she found that our "Wasp," though harmless when left to herself; would exhibit her sting, when disturbed even by a Frolic; and when she had dispatched the disturber of her nest she would pursue the "Reindeer" to the very chops of the British channel. Not satisfied with this, Great Britain dispatched her "Peacock," a fit emblem of her vain show, and though she spread her rear gaiety, and boasted like the rest of the British crafts, that her home was *on* the deep, our "Hornet" with less show, but with sure aim taught her in fifteen minutes that her home in future should be *in* rather than *on* the deep. And when the boasted mistress of

the ocean found that she could not divert us from our patriotic purpose by the sport of the Frolic, or the vain spread of her Peacock, she resolved to have recourse to blows and sent her "*Boxer*" to our coast ; but she soon found to her mortification and grief that we had "*Enterprise*," sufficient to meet any attack—that we could not only parry a well-aimed blow, but could give a fatal thrust in return.

When England's crazy monarch and her haughty ministry found themselves baffled on the land and defeated on the water ; and that the names of Hull, Decatur, Bainbridge, Jones, Porter, Perry, and McDonough, would go down to posterity with their Nelson and Rodney, they felt disposed to give up the contest. But did this mistress of the ocean, this arbiter of the fate of nations, come forward honorably and confess her errors, and promise to sin no more ? No ; she submitted to a policy more cringing and humiliating than any open stipulation would be. She virtually implored us not to demand any confession—not to ask her to say that she would give up her favorite custom of the Right of Search, or to confess that she had erred in doctrine of the rights of belligerents in time of war. Her language properly interpreted was : *Do not humiliate us ; sheath the sword ; give us peace, and we will give you no trouble in future*—nor has she on those points.

And thus, fellow soldiers, we have contributed our share in maintaining the interest and honor of our country—in giving security to our hardy seaman and in enjoying the rights of neutrals in times of war. And for more than half a century, we have been permitted by a merciful Providence to behold the growth and glory of our country. And it is a consolation, a matter of laudable pride, that we can say, that we were among those who were willing to cast their lot with our country, come weal or come woe. We glory in our past services and in the association into which we have entered, which has kept alive in some degree, that war which finally confirmed our freedom and established our standing among the nations of the earth.

The importance of the war in which we were engaged, and consequently the worth of our services, were not fully acknowledged at the time by the people in our midst. The war, preceded as it was by an embargo and other restrictions upon our trade, operated severely upon the commercial interest of New England ; and hence the war was rather unpopular in this section of the country. This opposition to the war was carried to an unreasonable extent, and proved the overthrow of the Federal party at the north. Under these circumstances our services were not fully appreciated by our

friends and neighbors. But when the people had recovered from the embarrassments of the war and the doctrines established by that war were seen in the extension of our commerce, they were ready to admit that the freedom of the seas, the protection of our seamen, and the exemption of our ships from the right of search, were national blessings—sovereign prerogatives, which every independent nation must enjoy.

With this enlargement of views, the worth of our services, were acknowledged. A feeling pervaded the country that the war of 1812 was one important link in the development of our country's rights; and that the men who stood by their country in that crisis, were entitled to the gratitude of the nation. The soldiers who had served in that war, without being officious, made a general movement in 1853, to form organizations in the different states to sustain a social feeling, to encourage love of country and the cause of human rights. There was a simultaneous movement in New York, Philadelphia and Boston. In Boston, Maj. Thomas Harrison, Levi T. Prescott, Esq., and others, mostly of the 9th Regiment of U. S. Infantry, adopted measures which resulted in the Association of soldiers of the war of 1812. The Association was organized Nov. 15, 1853, by the choice of Major Harrison, President, and Levi T. Prescott, Secretary. From that day to the present time, the Association has kept up its semi-annual meetings on the fourth of July and on the twenty-second of February, the birth-day of Washington, deeming these the most appropriate days to keep active our devotion to our country. Our members have increased to the number of two hundred and twenty; and have included men of all callings and professions; and in regard to character and social standing, they would compare favorably with any organization in the Commonwealth. We have had among our members, two Generals, eleven Colonels, seven Majors, eight Captains, six Clergymen, three doctors, and one member of Congress. After the death of Major Harrison, our first President, Col. Aspinwall was chosen in his place, who was continued by annual elections till 1874, when Hon. Charles Hudson was chosen his successor, and has filled that office till the present day. The office of Secretary was filled by Levi T. Prescott, Esq., twenty years, when his son, John J. Prescott, filled the office one year, and was succeeded by Col. William Goodwin and John S. Brown.

After the soldiers had formed their Association, and public attention was in this manner called to the subject of the war of 1812, and to the soldiers who had served therein, our Association has received

due attention from the public, having been invited to most of the celebrations and public gatherings in the State. The press, also, have given favorable notice of us and our meetings. And even Congress, at a late period, has acknowledged the value of our services by granting us a small stipend of a pension.

Our Association has been perfectly harmonious in all its actions ; and ignoring all party names, it has often adopted Resolutions sustaining the action of the Government in maintaining the honor of the flag and the integrity of the Union ; and though it has not held itself out as a charitable institution, it has relieved the wants of its members whenever it had means at its disposal.

On the whole, we have reason to rejoice in the part we took in the war which supplemented and perfected the treaty of 1783, and secured to our commerce the freedom of the seas, and gave us the rights and prerogatives of a sovereign nation. We also congratulate ourselves that we have enjoyed and we believe profited by the intercourse which this Association has afforded. We, therefore, owe a debt of gratitude to the ardent patriots who first conceived and who early sustained the Association ; and though the first two Presidents came from the service maimed in body, they were whole-souled, and showed themselves ready to make any other offering which their country might require. With a consciousness that we have rendered our country some service, and with an acknowledgment for the respect which the public have shown us, we have resolved to disband our Association. And this we do, not from any disaffection, but from the fact that our numbers have been greatly reduced by death, and that the distant location of many, and the increasing age and infirmity of all, render it difficult to keep up a meeting of any respectable size. At our last meeting, which was on a very favorable day, we had but fifteen members, whose average age was eighty-five years, and four of them were ninety and over.

We have reason to rejoice that our lives have been prolonged so that we have witnessed the extension and growth of our country, and the adaptation of our institutions both to peace and to war ; and above all, that we have lived to see the foul stain of human servitude blotted out from our escutcheon. We have enjoyed the blessings of freedom, and rejoiced in the honor our country has acquired abroad. She has become the asylum of the oppressed of all nations—a name and a praise to the whole earth.

And now fellow soldiers and comrades, as we are about to part to meet no more on earth, let us extend the hand of brotherhood and say as none but soldiers can, in the same spirit—FAREWELL.

APPENDIX.

"The New England Association of the Soldiers of the War of 1812," originated in a good degree, with the members of the 9th. Regiment of the United States Infantry, who had served on the Canadian Frontier. Among the most active were Major Thomas Harrison and Levi T. Prescott, Esq. The origin of the Association and the character of its members were briefly described by Levi T. Prescott, their secretary at one of their meetings, Colonel Aspinwall occupying the chair.

"This Association," said he, "was first organized Nov. 15, 1853, by a small number who served shoulder to shoulder in the army, on the Niagara Frontier, in Canada, most of whom, like yourself Mr. President, have unmistakable marks of having performed their duty as soldiers in the cause of their country. The 9th Regiment, with the 11th, 22d, and 25th, comprised General Scott's Brigade at the battles of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane, which received the highest approbation for firmness and bravery in these severe conflicts. These Regiments, as is well known, were under your command, Mr. President, in the sortie on the British batteries, from Fort Erie, that compelled them to abandon the seige."

The Association was first organized by the choice of Major Thomas Harrison, as president; and Levi T. Prescott, secretary. Major Harrison commanded a company in the 9th Regiment, and in the desperate charge at Chippewa lost his leg; and out of his full company of 96 men, only 15 were left unhurt after the shock. Harrison refused to be carried to the rear, but urged his men who loved him as a father, to go forward and do their duty. He died June 27, 1856, aged 64 years. He was buried with military honors. The association passed resolutions highly commending his worth as a soldier and patriot, and expressing their grief at the loss of a loved comrade.

On the death of Major Harrison, Colonel Thomas Aspinwall was elected to fill his place as president. Aspinwall distinguished himself on the frontier, especially in the sortie from Fort Erie, in which he lost an arm. As a reward for his military services he was appointed Consul to London, where he remained about forty years. He was elected president of our association without interruption or opposition, 18 years, or till his death which occurred April, 1876, when his place was filled by Hon. Charles Hudson, till the dissolution of the association.

The office of Vice President has been filled by General Samuel Chandler, who served 10 years ; who has been succeeded successively by Colonel Daniel Lane, Colonel Samuel Stinson, Hon. Charles Hudson, Colonel Henry Little, and William A. Parker, Esq.

The office of Secretary was first filled by Levi T. Prescott, who continued in office by annual elections about twenty years—a good proof of his fidelity ; he died April, 1874, when he was succeeded by his son, who served one year, and who was followed by Col. William Goodwin and John S. Brown.

The Association has included in its list of members not only distinguished military men, but we have had six clergymen, among whom were Rev. William Jenks, D. D., distinguished not only as a divine but as a scholar and author, and Rev. Eleazer M. P. Wells, D. D., and others, In the medical profession we have had Dr. E. S. Phelps, Dr. Jonathan Ware and Dr. Amos Farnsworth.

The fact that we have chosen the 4th of July and the birthday of Washington (Feb. 22d,) for our meetings, shows that our Association was to be devoted to the love of our country. And from time to time, when the exigency appeared to require, we have spoken freely. Everything has been perfectly harmonious from the first, and when we have adopted any Resolutions, unanimity has marked their character. In 1856, Resolutions were adopted in condemnation of any policy or measure, calculated to array any one section of the country against the other ; and in the midst of our late rebellion the Association spoke out plainly in condemnation of the authors of the unnatural contest, who should be held responsible for their treason ; and at the same time expressed their entire confidence in the justice of our cause, and in the wisdom and patriotism of the national Executive ; and gave our solemn pledge to sustain and support him as far as possible in his efforts to save the Republic, and give freedom to the slaves.

AN ALPHABETICAL LIST

*Of those who have been Members of the Association of the Soldiers
of the War of 1812. Those known to be dead are indicated
by a Star.*

Aspinwall, Col. Thomas,*
Andrews, Ebenezer T.,*
Andrews, William,*
Armstrong, Gen. W.,*
Allen, Rev. John,

Bates, Maj. William,*
Barrett, Oliver,
Burr, Theophilus,*
Baker, William,
Bayley, Frederick,*
Brown, Jesse,*
Bignall, Lovell,*
Burbank, Col. Sullivan,*
Bradford, Augustus,*
Baldwin, John,*
Butler, Thomas,*
Britnall, Maj. Thomas,*
Byron, Thomas C.,*
Bryant, Nathaniel,*
Baldwin, Isaac,
Buttrick, Cyrus,*
Basford, David,
Bowers, Isaac,*
Boies, James,*
Bell, William,
Bannister, John F.,*
Burrell, Daniel,
Brown, John S.,*
Burckes, Martin,
Barrett, John,
Brown Eliab,*
Barney, Rev. James O.,
Bemis, Isaac,
Birce Isaac,
Butters William,
Brigham, Jonathan,
Burnham, Charles
Beals, Isaac,
Bessey, Anthony,
Buell, Jeremiah
Bean, Levi,
Buxton, Frederick.
Barker, Capt. H.,
Barbrick, Moses,
Bromade, Abraham.

Coolidge, Col. Josiah,
Cashman, Lieut. Caleb,
Chandler, Gen. Samuel*
Cook, Timothy,*
Colburn, Jonas W.*
Cushing, Nathaniel,
Cutter, Ezra,
Child, Capt. Ebenezer,*
Clapp, Enos,
Codman, John,*
Condon, Samuel,
Collier, Jonathan,*
Crane, Silas,
Cilley, Capt. Joseph,
Calhoun, Reuben,*

Dunbar, Serg. Joseph.*
Dodd, Benjamin,*
Dorsett, Samuel H.,
Daniels, Leverett,*
Davis, William G.,
Ditson, John,
Dimmock, Col. John L.,*
Davis, W. N.,
Dolbar, Edward P.,*

Everett, William,
Eaton, Ezra,*

Frost, Phineas,
Frost, Peter,
Fisher, John,
Fuller, I.,
Frost, Joseph B.,*
Farwell, Isaac,*
Farnsworth, Dr. Amos,*
Francis, James,
Field, John,
Fowle, John,*
Felton, Oliver C.,
Fuller, Daniel,*
Frost, Isaac,*
Fletcher, Hon. Timothy,*
Fernald, William A.,

Grafton, Maj. Joseph,*
Gulliver, Stephen,*
Gates, John,*
Gillis, Theodore,*
Green, John*
Graston, J.,
Griggs, Lieut. Thomas,*
Graves, Thomas,*
Goodwin, Col. William,
Green, Luther.

Hooper, George,
Hill, George,*
Harden, John,
Hall, Lieut. Edward,
Hodgdon, Daniel,*
Hewitt, Serg. Job,*
Holmes, Davis,*
Holbrook, Col. Cephas,*
Henchman, Lewis,
Harrison, Maj. Thomas,*
Haskell, Calvin,*
Hillman, George,*
Heywood, Abraham,*
Haskell, Andrew,
Hemingway, Daniel.*
Hayden, Peter,*
Holbrook, Rev. John,*
Haywood, Nathan,*
Holmes, Rev. Sylvester,*
Hosmer, Castelio,*
Howe, Capt. John,*
Hudson, Hon. Charles,
Haywood, Ebenezer,*
Hawkes, Benjamin,
Harris, Col. Samuel D.*

Ingersoll, Capt. Jarod,*

Johnson, Joel,
Jenks, Rev. William.*
Jackson, Antipas,*
Johnson, Lieut. James,
Jackson, Alexander,
Jenkins, Samuel,
Jenkins, Solon.

Keith, Sergt. Robert,*	Rieh, John,*	Varnum, Nathaniel J.,*
Kendall, Amasa.*	Rice, Edmund,*	Weeman, Ebenezer,*
Kingsbury, Lieut. Lawson,*	Rowell, Rufus,*	Wright, Phileman.*
Knapp, Corp. Charles,	Raymond, Alvah,	Winslow, Nathaniel R.,*
	Robinson, Smith.*	Williams, Tillson.*
Lane, Col. Daniel.*		Welch, William.*
Loud, Ebenezer,*		Winsor, George,
Larabee, Josiah.*	Sias, Samuel,	Whitecomb, Levi L.,*
Little, Ebenezer H.,*	Shirley, William W.,*	Whitney, Lieut. Christopher,*
Little, Col. Henry.*	Sprague, Matthew,*	Ware, Dr. Jonathan,*
Lynes, Maj. Samuel,	Scott, Lieut. Benjamin H.,*	Wetherby, William,
	Stafford, William,	Wells, Rev. E. M. P., D. D.,*
Morton, Cornelius B.,*	Smith, Josiah.*	Watson, H. W.,*
Munroe, Lieut. Jonas.*	Stinson, Col. Samuel,*	Whitney, Leonard,*
Meador, Edward,*	Sanderson, Joseph,	Warner, Cyrus,*
McIntire, Timothy,	Stevens, Lemuel.*	Woodman, George,*
Morse, Maj. William.*	Stone, Asa.*	Woodward, Benjamin,
Moore, Otis,*	Stillson, Charles,	Wiswell, Lowell,
	Shaw, Capt. Nathaniel,	Wheeler, Isaac,
Nichols, William.*	Swett, Col. Samuel,*	Wellington, Lieut. Henry,
Noyes, Corp. Jacob,*	Stetson, John,	Weeks, Maj. Nathaniel,
Noble, Manson,*	Simpson, Paul R.,*	DeWitt, A.
Noyes, Jacob,*	Stephenson, Lieut. Benjamin,*	
Noyes, Capt. Alvah,	Sargent, Hosea,*	
Noyes, Benjamin,	Stevens, James,*	
Nash, James,	Stimpson, William,*	
	Simpson, Daniel,	
Prescott, Levi T., Esq.,*	Small, Isaac,	
Page, Capt. George,	Smith, William,*	
Plummer, Joshua,*		
Porter, Edward L.,*	Thompson, Samuel,*	
Pratt, David,*	Turner, Hezekiah,*	
Phelps, Dr. E. S.,*	Taggard, John,*	
Parker, William A.,	Tirrell, John,*	
Porter, Elijah.*	Thomas, George,	
Pierce, James,	Town, Calvin,	
Porter, Harvey,	Topliff, James,*	
Phipps, William K.,		
Perry, Capt. David,*		

The whole number of names upon the roll, 220.

Number known to have died, 131.

But probably the number of deaths is greater than is here stated, as we have no system of returns of deaths on which we can rely.





